

Philadelphia Teacher and Principal Incentive Fund Project

Beginning in fall 2007, approximately 175 classroom teachers and 5 school principals in Philadelphia Charter Schools participated in the Incentive Fund Project, which implemented performance-based bonuses and opportunities for career advancement. Student growth standards were established via a Student Academic Growth System, which was used as a primary determining factor in eligibility for bonuses.

Needs Assessment Results and General Information

By Fall 2008, the program will expand to a total of eleven (11) high-need urban elementary schools (grades 3 to 8) serving approximately 6,000 students. More than 70 percent of the District's students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch; more than 80 percent are African-American or Latino. In 2007–08, the city experienced its seventh consecutive year of growth in math and reading scores on the State test, and the percentages of students scoring at proficient levels in math increased to 49.0 percent overall and 44.0 percent in reading.

Background

The overall purpose of the initiative is to pilot a performance-based staff development and compensation system that provides teacher and principal incentives tied directly to student achievement growth and classroom evaluations. The current compensatory system is based on seniority and certifications/degrees and is not tied to student achievement. The existing Student Academic Growth model will be used to support the Incentive Fund Project.

Incentives

The program in year two included cash bonuses for individual teachers, principals, and instructional support staff, as well as opportunities for career advancement with salary increases. Mentor and master teacher roles were established. Bonuses for teachers were based on student achievement at the school level. For principals, 50 percent of the bonus was targeted for student achievement at the school level and 50 percent was based on an external program review of the implementation of the TAP program. Other teachers and staff bonuses were based on schoolwide performance. Opportunities for full or partial bonuses were available.

Evaluation

An external evaluator was contracted to conduct the program evaluation, in collaboration with the district's own Office of Research and Evaluation. A rigorous evaluation plan includes baseline data collection for the non-equivalent comparison group interrupted time series design. Under this plan, two non-equivalent comparison groups will be identified and tracked over time. Student Academic Growth will be used to

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| LOCATION(S) | Philadelphia, Pennsylvania |
| AWARD DATE | November 2006 |
| DURATION | 5 years |
| PARTNERS | School District of Philadelphia, teacher and principal unions |

measure year-to-year teacher and student progress to determine school and/or teacher effects on students' academic achievement. Valid, reliable, standards-based observation rubrics will be used to assess teacher and principal effectiveness. Implementation measures include surveys and quarterly meetings.

Resources

The district is partnering with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) to implement the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) in participating schools. The TAP model is the basis for delivering professional development services to school leadership teams. Funds will be allocated to build the necessary infrastructure to support the project. By the fifth year of the project, the district will cover 75 percent of the costs (more than \$2.4 million). The schools will allocate funds from their annual budgets to cover costs of the differentiated compensation and infrastructure.

Data Systems

Philadelphia has created a single, secure, online data warehouse that collects student-level data, which can be linked to individual schools and teachers. The district will issue a separate contract with the SAS Institute to conduct individual classroom-level analysis needed to measure teacher impact on student academic growth.

Year 2 Activities

- Used Student Achievement Growth Data to calculate bonuses for cohort one schools.
- Held TAP Summer Institute “Philly Style” during the week of July 8–11, 2008.
- Provided TAP training to school leadership teams and provided ongoing support and training to participating schools.
- Saw double digit gains on the statewide assessment in three of the four TAP schools.
- Distribute bonuses to teachers, principals, and instructional support staff based on student academic growth.

Challenges

- Two of the original five schools opted not to continue with the program.

Successes

- Recruited and selected eight new schools to begin TIF program implementation for the 2008-09 school year.
- Provided TAP training to the eight new school's leadership teams and established infrastructure to provide ongoing support and training to participating schools.

Outlook for Year 3

- Use SAS to provide grade level student academic growth measures with 11 schools.
- Concentrate on rubric training and cluster development with cohort 2 schools.
- Communicate statewide success of program implementation.
- Provide school support for 360 teachers and approximately 6,000 students.